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Med Med

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Turpentine

No. 1

An Essay on the practical
application of Turpentine
to the cure of diseases, by
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Virginia.

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Landon C. Rives

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On the application of the



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On the application of turpentine
to the cure of diseases—

Venus turpentine is an exudation from a tree, the *Pinus Larix* of Linnaeus. It is thick and tenacious, semi-pellucid, of a pale yellowish colour, a peculiar odour & a bitter pungent taste. By distillation with the addition of a little water it affords abundantly an essential oil which is light, volatile and inflammable—

It is this oil, designated by the title of *oleum turpenthinum*, which is most commonly used in medicine; and perhaps few articles of the materia medica have been ever consecrated to a greater variety of purposes in the management of diseases. In one dose it acts as a diuretic, in another as an anthelmintic or purgative, and when applied externally it is an active rubefacient; but its character is more particularly that of a stimulant specifically directed to the urinary organs. Endowed with such dower

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sific powers, we should readily imagine that the turpentine was appropriated to the cure of a large circle of diseases; nor shall we have any cause to change this opinion if we consult the late medical journals of this country or of Europe. To bring under one view the different diseases to which it has been applied, to estimate its value in each, and as far as practicable, to explain its *modus operandi*, are the objects of this essay.

When taken internally, the spirits of turpentine is a most active and pervading stimulant, and hence is well adapted to all the low stages of disease, when the indication is to support the tone and strength of the system. Dr. Chapman bears testimony to its value in the sinking condition of the winter epidemic, and we are told upon the same

Notes.

- ② By Dr. Chapman I have been told since the writing of this essay that he has understood that Dr. Physick used the turpentine very freely in one case, at least, of yellow fever and with great success so early as the year 1798 or 1799. Dr. Physick may therefore be regarded as the author of the practice which I have incorrectly - by sympathy to the Physicians of the City Hospital -

authority, that it is not less suited to the advanced stages of genuine typhus fever. In all the atonic shapes of disease, whether primary, or subsequently induced, the turpentine, I am persuaded, will prove a most valuable remedy.

In the year 1798 turpentine was prescribed by Dr. Physick in small doses to check the vomitings incident to yellow fever, and the practice was adopted by many of the medical men of this city upon his authority. But during the last season it was elevated to a much higher rank in the management of this disease. No longer regarded merely as a remedy to allay an urgent symptom it became the principal weapon with which the disease itself was combated.

I shall not stop to enquire into the pathology of yellow fever. The character

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istic phenomena of the disease and dissections demonstrate it to be a case of highly ag-
gravated gastric inflammation. So well
indeed, does this point appear to be ascer-
tained that it would be an unpardon-
able degree of scepticism to doubt it.
Influenced therefore as well by this view
of the disease, as by the known efficacy
of turpentine when applied to external
inflammations produced by burns &c, the
Physicians of the City Hospital early
resorted to its use in all the cases which
came under their care during the last
season. I regret that I cannot illustrate
the value of the practice by a reference
to the cases, but as I have not been able
to obtain a record of them, I must con-
tent myself with a very abridged state-
ment of the general results, without no-
ticing the effects of the medicine upon

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the different features of the large Wap-
paw in the last part of the Canon. I
submit these are the main principles
imposed and that it was considered
in large and repeated cases. Secondly
that it was, previous to the difficult
situation, and with a view of a more
active inflammation. Thirdly that
it was for the first part of the second
or third day of the disease after the
first inflammation was supposed to be
abated, but it was soon after the con-
valescence of the first day and with
equal advantage. And lastly, as the re-
sult of the disease, it appears that a
small portion occurs in the water
Blast of treatment therefore necessary
-ed -

The case mentioned above I have
seen and I have never observed it to be



from that temperature will be not only in-
sensibly improved in the little children. And
this opinion the excellent experience of some
years is now a daily confirmation by
constant experience. On the authority of
Mr. Keble, I am enabled to state that
Dr. W. Keble, Physician to the British
forces in India, in his late account of
the Plague in that Island, most positively
asserts that no treatment was found to
be successful in the disease as Cold affec-
tion and turpentine.

But many years ago Mr. Keble
of Dublin introduced to the notice of the
Professors the utility of turpentine in the
treatment of the present plague. The plan
was to use it in large doses internally and
frequently repeated, and to apply cloth
soaked in it to the abdomen so as to
produce superficial inflammation. &c.

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admits the fact, from the very commea-
ment of the disease, and if his statement
is worthy of credit with the medical
faculty, results. I suppose, however, not
standing the contrast to an old
"Dremer speaks of the disease in the
case before us, that I should not be sur-
prised to imitate his practice. After the
depleting course we have seen, and as
as the strength of the system is so poor,
I can readily conceive that the system
may be working, and that as soon as
within the system, as to maintain a pe-
culiar inflammation, which I doubt.
The indiscriminate application of
purgatives to all cases of prostatic disease
is to all its stages, I should presume
is entirely to be rejected.

In Catarrh, Prostatitis and Uteritis
and in many other cases, many



employed. The progress of the disease in
the young is less threatening to its vitality
in most of these diseases. It is only here
and in those advanced stages that the
recruits to its cause - when a vomiting, of food
rather than the other symptoms are approached
any person with the hope that with
frequency discharging the process by an
inducing the inflammation is maintaining
the waking thought of the patient.

It is the common type of vomiting in
that a hyperemia after the inflammation
stage of the complaint has passed away
and yet may be repeated from the in-
tervention of hyperemia. And in some
diseases it is a curable remedy. In
the first disease it is the practice of it.
What is to give the commencement in
the young cases.

Best medicine has been lately met



proceeding is one of the diseases apper-
taining to the class Neurosis. In the in-
teresting details of the various family
and even the individual cases into the treat-
ment of the disease before the pro-
cedure was proposed in Europe the disease
and by the numerous interesting re-
markable cases which were presented
to show in the course of his path a proce-
dure in the class Neurosis of this city and
with occasional benefit; but after the
while the Professor is not aware that he
has not accomplished much by the
course. In the 1st volume of the me-
moirs of the late Professor some cases
of this disease are detailed by Dr. C. B. B.
and they are in the class Neurosis
and the case is one of the most
in which the disease was affected by the
most serious of the disease. The next



of mental confusion after the attack,
that in such cases it is entirely unpro-
picious to any person, or even to have
friends, who are in a low and
afflicted mind. These people
depend upon others, and frequently
lose in this way. The greatest benefit
may be anticipated from the best
and most in cases dependent upon
the excitement arising from
any part of the body, or even
with a dangerous fracture of the
limb, can be made to act with the
proper care. By the treatment proper
to any other disease, and
and thus avoid the disease.

It seems to be the case
also in cases where there are not
any real constitutional causes of it.
Every accommodation must be made.



of Dublin in England, which in the
Lecture of the 17th Dec. showed great
transitions of the sun, the history of a
case in which he was cured by this me-
-ody. The patient was a lady of great
nervous irritability. She had been treated
inappropiately for several days by purges
and other measures which it became neces-
sary to stop to give her the benefit of the
induction. This procedure had no effect
that day. In evening I attended her and was
present in a few minutes to thank the
Doctor for the benefit which he had
afforded her. I have not written this
communication from a belief that the
society will be generally of this opinion,
but from a persuasion that neither a
wholly unnecessary of Dublin which has
ever accomplished any good is a lesson
that not uncommonly converts the best

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directed efforts of medicinal skill.

I now come to the consideration of
inspiration as an antihelmintic and am
satisfied it is owing to them at the
time of the use of medicines. The his-
tory of its introduction into the treat-
ment of larvae would afford a striking
illustration of how much medicine
is due to accident. For it must be
admitted the medicine. But it would be con-
trary to my purpose to enter into re-
counts of the various methods of adminis-
tration and the various preparations. I have
therefore in the first place, tried to call
the attention of the physician to the utility
of inspiration in cases of larvae, and
then to the various methods of adminis-
tration. I have made out the medicinal
in comparison with the country with the
most favorable results. It does in

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one to two ounces and some in the 1st.
-the quantity it usually produces very un-
pleasant consequences. Generally it
is not more than one or two 1st. in dispo-
-tions occasionally excessive, but they
soon pass away, and continuing in what
might be anticipated. It may be that
it is apt to be produced by the use of
mercurial doses - the action of the medicine
as a vomituge can only be accounted
for by supposing that it excites a pro-
pensity to vomit upon the vomit which at
first discharges it then removes by the pro-
-gative operation. This operation, however,
is itself not to be confounded with the
action that, in all the cases mentioned
by Dr Ferrius (and the various cases)
the most accurate prognosis has been
infectiousness and; and that after the
evacuation of the operation the disease

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was suddenly discharged in a flood
of urine.

The office of the prostate in relation
to its employment in the
intractable species of cancer - a sort
of prohibition is well to be ascribed to
it. It does not lie in such, but it tends
in an unnecessary degree of minute-
ness to enter into such details. The
prostate which can reject a growth is
sure to attempt to create a pyrexia.

To be entitled to the name of pyrexia
it should be that with which we are
acquainted. It is not then the
it is decidedly entitled to the dis-
tinction. It operates most probably
by connecting the mucous discharge
from the ureters or bladder with
which all the complaints are usually
connected.

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In (Proper) the suspension has been
used but with very successful results.
As a diuretic it has accomplished much
more in hanging down the bow in Glat
and in the same manner.

In some cases when our medi-
cine has been a sufficient employment
during the convalescence and when the
traces of Great Britain were much
exposed and this is often prevented in
consequence to a very great extent many
cases are related to have been cured
by the free exhibition of suspension
after all the usual remedies had un-
-timely failed.

To speak in the stomach and
to all the epidemic affections of the
digestive canal suspension is well
suited. In flatulent colic it is a fa-
vorable prescription of Dr. DeWitt's

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combien de fois j'ai été au péril de la vie; &
 les conséquences de l'échec - sont devenues
 à cet égard si graves, que j'ai dû y renoncer.

It may be a rare effect even de-
pendent upon dyspepsia, such as ty-
phus and cholera, in our section
are frequently observed, which, in all
obstinate cases of constipation Dr. Chap-
man thinks the warm oil beneficial.

4. Another law is the application of $1\frac{1}{2}$ of the former to $1\frac{1}{3}$ of the latter as number adopted as for the first - a section

As an infection in electrotype lo-
cals, Dr. Cohen recommends the Turbin-
thate. It is a very powerful & cer-
tainly effective and is usually prepared
by heating or warming the patient with
the folds of eyes & covering it with
moisture of turbinthate or flex cas-

As a substitute the blue

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is very active and hence promises utility in all cases where it is advisable to produce superficial inflammation or where a counter-irritant is demanded. In rheumatism, in sprains and swellings of the joints, in affections of the throat and in pleurodynia it is an important local application.

Mixed with basilicon ointment turpentine constitutes one of the best and most liniment (omings) to burns, but care must be taken in applying it, as, if it touches the healthy skin, it is extremely irritating.

I might even go on still to enumerate other minor affections in which our medicine has been employed; But it would be useless to swell this essay by such minute details - Enough, I am sure, has been

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already said, to demonstrate the great
importance of turpentine as a re-
medy, & to point to the principles
which should govern us in its ap-
plication to the cure of disease.

